



WESTERN NEWS

Libby MT 59923

Wednesday & Friday

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LHO

Confidence

With all the moaning and groaning about Libby being back in the national news on Monday, try to find mention of the town in the media today.

It's old news.

The media has moved on to other stories and other places.

But they will be back. This story is not done. It won't be for another 60-70 years, at least.

The best message we can provide is "We're moving forward." That's all that matters. We're taking care of business.

Economic plans should just assume that some version of the cleanup will be ongoing for a considerable length of time. In reality, that's not a bad thing because it's bringing outside money into the community.

Even after the EPA says they're finished, some sort of maintenance program will continue for responding to remodeling projects in which vermiculite is encountered.

Perhaps the biggest problem we face is not media related but health related. People diagnosed with asbestos-related disease will need financial help to receive the prescribed medical assistance.

I'm confident we can crack this nut, just like I'm confident the Port Authority is going to continue to create more opportunity, that the downtown and the rest of the community is going to transform itself into a brilliant Phoenix. We will have an 18-hole golf course in the near future, and we will have a decent horse and outdoor facility at J Neils Memorial County Park.

I'm also confident that in time we will work out the forest management issue because everything returns to common sense in time.

The reason I'm confident is because more and more people in this area are beginning to talk to one another realizing that sitting around pointing fingers of blame doesn't accomplish anything except setting ourselves farther behind.

It doesn't matter that some goober in some other part of the state thinks Libby is unsafe. We know better and the evidence is on our side. We just need to keep moving forward and keep a positive attitude. Leave the naysaying to the goobers. — Roger Morris